SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Madam, the Minister has not addressed himself to the main thrust of my quesiton. I want to know whether there is any plan to develop these refineries, particularly, the Digboi refinery, in view of the fact that it is one of the oldest refineries in the world.

श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र: हमने शुरू में ही कह दिया है कि विकसित करने के लिए प्रयास किया जाएगा।

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर को स्पष्ट कर दिया कि यह मिलियन टन था। वह तो ठीक है लेकिन जैसे कि आपने स्वयं बताया कि इतनी छोटी, मिनी रिफाइनरी लगाने के लिए जो उत्पादन लागत आने वाली है, वह चौगुनी अधिक आने वाली है, इसलिए इसकी उपयोगिता नहीं है। जब आप स्वयं इस बात को महसूस कर रहे थे कि इतनी छोटी रिफाइनरी लगाने से कोई उपयोगिता नहीं है तब इस प्रकरण को समाप्त करने के लिए निर्देश देने में आपको क्या कठिनाई है?

दूसरी, इसी संदर्भ की बात है कि पेट्रोलियम की फिर भी देश को आवश्यकता है। आपके समक्ष गैसो-आयल के प्रोजेक्ट के बारे में कई बार चर्चा आ चुकी है। उसके बारे में आप क्या सोच रहे हैं?

श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र: फीज़िबिलिटी रिपोर्ट तैयार करते समय कई चीजें विचार की जाती हैं। शुरू में मैंने कहा था कि दूरदराज़ में अगर कहीं तेल निकलता है तो उसको रिफाइनरी तक ले जाने में ढुलाई का ज्यादा खर्च न पड़ जाए, एक तो उसको सोचा जाता है। दूसरा यह सोचा जाता है कि जहां तेल निकला है उसके नज़दीक कोई मार्किट है या नहीं है। आखिर तक इसका अध्ययन करते रहना चाहिये कि अगर किसी तरह से तेल वहां पहुंचा देने के लिए जो नज़दीक का इलाका है, ढुलाई का खर्च बच जाए तो इस पर विचार करते रहना चाहिये और यह निरंतर चलने वाली प्रक्रिया है। इसलिए दरवाजा कभी बन्द नहीं करना चाहिये, मैं इस राय का हूं। गैसो-आयल के बारे में माननीय सदस्य को मैं विभाग से जानकारी ले कर बता दूंगा।

*243. **[The Questioner (Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee) was absent. For answer** *vide* col.....infra]

*244. **[The Questioner (Shri Ram Jethmalani) was absent. For answer** *vide* col.....infra]

Revival of MCFL by KRIBHCO

*245. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to refer to answers to the Unstarred Questions 4459, 746 and 801 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 16th May, 1997, 28th February, 1997 and 29th November, 1996, respectively, and state:

(a) whether the commitments of KRIBHCO for its ongoing projects had to be changed to undertake the revival of M/s Mangalore Chemcials and Fertilizers Limited (MCFL);

(b) if so, the changes made; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) No investment decision in regard to the rehabilitation of Mangalore Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd. (MCFL) has been taken by KRIBHCO which is exploring its feasibility as a diversification option. KRIBHCO has not changed any of its investment commitments on account of its interest in the rehabilitation of MCFL.

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Nilatpal Basu.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Madam, you had been a witness to the agitation yesterday in this House about the revival of sick public sector fertilizer units. Now, FRIBHCO is a cooperative sector fertilizer unit in which the Government of India has 80 per cent equity. This company is paying tax to the tune of Rs. 85 crores every year. Because of the huge cash reserves it was contended earlier that some of the surplus could be invested to revive some of the public sector units. It was mentioned earlier by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers that this could not be done because of their pre-occupation with other investment decisions.

Now in the question itself we have referred to the Unstarred Question No. 4459. It was admitted by the Government and I quote:

> "Preparing a scheme for rehabilitaiton of Messrs. Mangalore Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited. KRIBHCO has submitted an offer to the operating agency which *inter alia* envisages an investment of Rs. 109.08 corores."

Now the Minister has come forward saying that there is no investment decision. This merely to mislead the House because there was a clear offer of a rehabilitation plan and it was revised as per the directives of the BIFR. Now the word is being changed to diversification, has sought extension of time up to the fifth of next month for that purpose. No investment decision has so far been taken in this matter.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Madam, I think the Minister's reply has also revealed the inconsistency in the position taken by the Government. First of all, it is stated that the State Government of Karnataka has got. 6% equity. I don't understand how that converts a private sector company into a joint sector company. In the light of the kind of debate that we are having nowadays in this country, at least, I fail to understand it. Maybe, there are wiser Members in this House who will understand it.

Madam, time and again we have been saying that these companies are paying tax through the nose because they cannot invest their surplus. There are sick public sector units owned by the Government of India which are craving for investment. The chief Minister of West Bengal has written for the revival of the Durgapur unit. There are so many other units like Namrup, Ramagundam, Barauni and sindri. If the Government is interested to revive the fertilizer plants, why not one of these units? But the Chief Minister of West Bengal was told that KRIBHCO had lost its interest. Earlier it had some interest, but now it has lost its interest. Now this kind of an offer is being sent to BIFR. I think this calls for a serious indepth inquiry by the CBI. I think there is something amiss and some serious suspicion arises out of the manner in which all these things are being dealt with. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he will agree to hold such an inquiry.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Madam, KRIBHCO had looked into the viability of revamping the units of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation and the Fertilizer Corporation of India in 1995. A preliminary study was undertaken in respect of three units including the Durgapur unit of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation. In view of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation's accumulated loss, surplus manpower, obsolete technology, high cost production and retention price of urea at the Durgapur unit in the post revamped situation, the KRIBHCO management concluded that revamping of the Durgapur unit was not an economically viable proposition for the society.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Society?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: KRIBHCO is a cooperative society. KRIBHCO had also explored the possible of setting up a new urea plant at the existing plant site of Durgapur after carrying out feasibility study. KRIBHCO had decided to send a proposal for setting up a newammonia-urea plant at the existing plant site at Gorakhpur. The proposal is being processed for obtaining the first stage clearance of the Government for an investment decision.

So far as his second question is concerned, the Government is committed to transparency. If the House feels that any inquiry is needed, we are for it.

SHRI JIBON ROY: The basic question is this. If a public sector company possesses some surplus, should it invest in

a sister public sector company or outside? Here the total cost of the HFC revival plant was Rs. 4.60 crores. KRIBHCO was requested to invest in any of the plants. But instead of investing in these plants, KRIBHCO went to Russia to revive two sick industries. They spent a lot of money there. They lost around Rs. 2 crores of Rs. 3 crores in the process.

When this question was raised to revive the HFC unit, they said that they have their own commitment in Hazira and other areas. We have come to know that invested in MCFL which is a private company. Madam, a definite serious financial mismanagement is going on. I am glad that the Minister has agreed for an investigation into the matter. Since the Minister himself has said that there is no proposal to invest in MCFL, will he direct KRIBHCO to adopt any of the HFC plants? It may not be Durgapur. Let them accept Namrup or Barauni. They can adopt it and revive it. Will the Minister consider it?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Madam, the setting up of a new plant in Gorakhpur with the existing infrastructure is at an advanced stage. I hope the Member will be happy to know that KRIBHCO is taking the necessary steps.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, it is a national question. The problem of fertilizer units is of national importance becasue it is interlinked with our agricultural production. It is well known that agricultural production suffered a setback in the country and that is why we had to import foodgrains. We are also getting fertilizer from outside. To import fertilizer we have to pay taxes and we have to pay a high price on the imported commodity. In such a situation, the most important decision that the Government will have to take or consider is: How to increase the productive capacity of fertilizer units in the country? Keeping this in view, is it true that KRIBHCO is flush with funds? More than Rs. 8.00 crores is the total volume of funds that it has. If so, how is that fund going to be utilised and will the hon. Minister assure us that this fund will not be left idle but will be invested? While taking the investment decision, will the Government take this into consideration or will the society take this into consideration or will the Government ask its directors to take this into consideration? If the question of so-called freedom of the cooperative sector is raised, will the Government direct its directors to take into consideration the question of investing surplus fund in augmenting our fertilizer production, particularly, that of the public sector?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Madam, I will answer the earlier question which my hon. friend raised. KRIBHCO is very much interested in adding a third stream of Ammonia urea in Hazira the proposal is shortly coming up for PIB clearance. The investment envisaged is about Rs. 1096 crores. Coming to the next point raised by my hon. firend, the total investible money with KRIBHCO as on 1st April, 1997 was about Rs. 1045.57 crores.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, that is the question. Will the Minister answer why the fund was left idle?... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: They have a proposal ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer. You have put a question. He is answering...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is not just the sick units. The question is: Why was the fund lying idle?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer. He is still in the process of answering.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: They have a proposal to invest this money in new plants as well as in the Gorakhpur unit. As far as production of fertilizer in the country is concerned, it is targeted to increase by 4 per cent this year. The

growth in fertilizer production during the first quarter of 1997-98 has been of the order of 34 per cent. During the current year, as major fertilizer projects are being commissioned, additional urea will be generated. As far as this money is concerned, KRIBCHO is already planning to revive the Gorakhpur unit by setting up a new Ammonia Urea plant. This will require an investment of Rs. 1300 crores.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I seek your indulgence. My point is very important. The question is: Why was such a huge surplus fund left idle in the coffers of that particular unit? By doing that, the unit lost money and the production of fertilizer in the country suffered. What could be the reasons?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: That was the Boards decision. The Board has decided to invest it in various projects.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: How long will it lie idle?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has just answered that it was the Board's decision.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Madam, I may come to the help of the Minister as to why this money has been kept like this and I will tell you how long it has been kept. From 1992-93 to 1996-97, every year they have been paying a tax of Rs. 80 crores to Rs. 99 crores. I am not talking about HFCL but I am talking about KRIBHCO itself. What has happened during the last four to five years, Madam, is, projects are being taken up and projects are being dropped like hot potatoes for reasons which are to be investigated. Just now the Minister has said that a project is going to be taken up at Hazira for ammonia-urea. For the information of the House may I say that there was a proposal for Hazira expansion in nitro-phosphate taken up in 1994. First its clearance was obtained from the Government, in the second stage clearance was obtained from the PIB and all of a sudden in 1996 it was dropped. Similarly, they have gone to America and Russia to take over the sick units and they continued for two years, from 1992 to 1994. After spending Rs. 2 crores it was found that it was not viable. That was dropped. This Gorakhpur project, I have been going through all the replies, KRIBHCO is still evincing interest. There is no commitment. In Durgapur also they had gone. They had evinced interest. Then they informed the Chief Minister that their interested waned. I would like to tell the hon. Minister, he is very trasparent as he said, that this whole thing must be inquired into for the good of the country, for the good of KRIBHCO. Would the Minister without any other ambiguity, now conduct an inquiry by either CAG or CBI, whatever may be correct, for the good of the Government?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Madam, I have said we are committed to transparency, if the House feels you can go in for any kind of test.

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Sir, the public sector is owned by the Government and to revive it the Government will have to take interest in that. What I would like to know is, what exactly is the initiative taken by the Ministry to make use of the surplus funds in KRIBHCO to revive the public sector units?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Madam , the Government is going to the Cabinet with some proposals in regard to Fertilizer Corporation as well as Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation very shortly.

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Sir, my question has not been answered. The question that I put is, what initiative has the Government taken to approach the KRIBHCO people, the Directors of KRIBHCO, to utilise the money for reviving the public sector units?

SHRI M . ARUNACHALAM: That is what I have answered earlier. They have gone to various units for preliminary studies. It is not feasible. Therefore, they have given it up and they are now taking

up the Gorakphur unit, to be set up at Gorakhpur.

Trains Detained at Jharsuguda (Orissa)

*246. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minsiter of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware that all running trains were detained for about one hour at Jharsuguda (Orissa) in the morning of 6th July last due to harassment of the passengers by Railway Protection Force (Police);

(b) whether any enquiry is being conducted; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

रेल मंत्री (श्री राम विलास पासवान): (क) से (ग) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) से (ग) जी हां। मुंबई जाने वाली गाड़ी नं० 8002 में मार्गरक्षी ड्यूटी पर तैनात रेल सुरक्षा बल के कर्मियों द्वारा कथित उत्पीड़न के विरुद्ध यात्रियों के प्रदर्शन के कारण 6.7.97 को झारसुगुड़ा रेलवे स्टेशन पर तीन गाड़ियों अर्थात गाड़ी नं० 8002 अप (हावड़ा-मुंबई मेल), गाड़ी नं० 8034 अप (हवड़ा-अहमदाबाद एक्सप्रेस) और 8690 डाऊन (अलेपी-बोकारो स्टील सिटी एक्सप्रेस) को रुकना पड़ा था।

6.7.97 की इस घटना के बारे में दक्षिण पूर्व रेलवे के रेल सुरक्षा बल द्वारा की गई जांच से पता चला हैं कि टाटा रेलवे स्टेशन के गाड़ी मार्गरक्षी कम्पनी के रेल सुरक्षा बल के 4 कार्मिक मार्गरक्षी ड्यूटी के लिए गाड़ी में (नं० 8002) चल रहे थे। परंतु इन 4 कार्मिकों ने गाड़ी में यात्रियों के टिकट देखने शुरू कर दिए जिसके लिए वे प्राधिकृत नहीं थे। यात्रियों ने इसका विरोध किया। मार्गरक्षी दल की कार्रवाई के विरोध में यात्रियों ने उक्त गाड़ियों को रोका और वे रेलवे सुरक्षा बल के संबंधित कार्मिकों के निलंबन की मांग करने लगे। यात्रियों की शिकायत पर राजकीय रेलवे पुलिस, झारसुगुड़ा ने रेल सुरक्षा बल के मार्गरक्षी दल के विरुद्ध एक मामला दायर किया है। रेल सुरक्षा बल के कार्मिकों को 25.7.97 को गिरफ्तार किया गया था और 30.7.97 को अदालत ने उन्हें जमानत पर छोड़ दिया था। पुलिस में मामला दर्ज होने के अलावा दक्षिण पूर्व रेल प्रशासन ने रेल सुरक्षा बल के कार्मिकों के विरुद्ध बड़े दंड की अनुशासनिक कार्रवाई करके उन्हें 6.7.97 को निलंबित कर दिया है।

उपसभापति: अब आप जल्दी से अपना प्रश्न पूछ लीजिए।

श्री सनातन बिसि: मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि यह जो मिसयूज हो रहा है, इस पर आप फ्यूचर ऐक्शन क्या लेंगे?

श्री राम विलास पासवान: उपसभापति महोदया, जिन कर्मचारियों के खिलाफ शिकायतें आई हैं, मैंने अपने जवाब में भी कहा है कि इन चारों को उसी समय गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया। इनको 25.7.97 को गिरफ्तार किया गया और उसके बाद अदालत को सौंप दिया गया। रेलवे सुरक्षा बल के खिलाफ जो भी इस तरह की शिकायत हमारे सामने आती है, उस पर हम तुरंत कार्यवाही करते हैं। यदि माननीय सदस्य पिछले 3 सालों के आंकड़ें देखें तो हमें 1995 में 6, 1996 में 7 और जून, 1997 तक 2 रिबोर्ट्स मिली हैं और इन 15 मामलों में रेलवे सुरक्षा बल के 30 कर्मी शामिल पाए गए। इनमें से 13 कर्मियों को सेवा से हटा दिया गया, एक के रैंक में कटौती करके उसे दंडित किया गया, 8 कर्मियों की वेतन-वृद्धि पर रोक लगा दी गई और 5 कर्मियों के खिलाफ जांच-पड़ताल लंबित है। और तीन अदालती मामलों का सामना कर रहे हैं। तो इस तरह का खासकर रेलवे सुरक्षा बल के कर्मचारियों के खिलाफ जब हमारे पास में कोई शिकायत आती है चूंकि वह रक्षक हैं, उनका काम है रक्षा करना और अगर उनके खिलाफ इस तरह की शिकायत आती है तो उनके खिलाफ हम गहन छानबीन करते हैं और अगर यह सामने आता है कि वह सचमुच में दोषी हैं तो उनके खिलाफ कड़ी से कड़ी कार्रवाई की जाती है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERES TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Gauge Conversion of Silchar-Lumding Railway line

*243. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: